

B. GUILT AND SHAME

In this section of the material I have gathered together the bulk of those incidents which illustrate the notions of young children about punishment for wrong-doing, and their actual feelings of guilt and shame.

These feelings are shown in three main modes; (a) *in direct expression*, such as, for example, when Frank cries bitterly because he has wet his trousers : " Oh, *do* wash it off ", he says, or when Paul in the same situation cries with bitter tears and sobs, " I'm so ashamed of myself, *I'm so ashamed* of myself " ; (b) when the children express their guilt in various forms of *play*, for example, the game of Dr. Faustus, or being put in prison by Mrs. I., or saying in a joking way, " Isn't it a mess, *isn't* it a mess " ; and (c) the *projected form* of guilt, when they call other people " dirty " or " horrid ", when, for example, Harold says sententiously, " I don't like big boys to tease little ones ", or Paul tells Mrs. I. he " is very ashamed of her ", because she has been cross with him when he teased Dan. He was himself really very guilty about having teased Dan,

This projected guilt is one of the biggest factors in the children's active hostility to each other. Very often they scold or push, or try to punish in some other way one of the other children, or try to be rude or defiant to the adults, through the pressure of guilt for their own " bad " impulses and unconscious phantasies. It is here that this section of the material links up so closely with both group and individual hostility. The children see their own faults in each other and attack each other as bad, whether by active aggression or by moral superiority and scorn.

These illustrations of guilt and shame in young

children may
be further discussed from three main points of
view : (i) the
type of situation which stirs up feelings of guilt
and shame ;
(2) the content of the feelings, that is, the
nature of the
punishment feared, or felt to be deserved ; (3)
the question
of how far these feelings are the result of either
specific teaching
or the general attitude of adults, and how far
they are spon-
taneous in the child; and, if the latter, the
nature of the
psychic processes which give them birth.